

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Method for manufacturing sheets of agglomerate material making use of electromagnetic radiofrequency waves having a frequency of less than 300 MHz ~~and, the method comprising the steps of~~, in succession,

a first step involving preparation of a mix by mixing together stone materials of predetermined particle size with a binder consisting of organic resins,

a second step involving distribution of said mix inside a tray mould so as to form a layer of mix,

a third step involving vacuum vibro-compaction in order to obtain a compacted sheet, and

a final step involving hardening or catalysis of the binder by means of heating ovens in order to obtain the finished products,

~~characterized in that~~wherein the said use of electromagnetic radiofrequency waves takes place in an intermediate step between said third vacuum vibro-compaction step and said final hardening step which consists in dielectrically preheating the compacted sheet until it reaches a temperature which is less than 10°C, and preferably less than 5°C, below the temperature at which the catalysis of the binder starts in the subsequent final hardening step.

2. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the compacted sheet is preheated until it reaches a temperature which is less than 5°C.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the end of said intermediate preheating step, the compacted sheet reaches a temperature lower than the temperature at which catalysis of the binder starts and preferably ranging of between 75°C and 78°C.

5. (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein it is used for a mix which contains granulates of the expanded type.

6. - 8 cancelled.

9. (new) A method for manufacturing a sheet of agglomerate material, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) mixing stone materials of predetermined particle size with a binder consisting of organic resins to produce a mix;
- (b) distributing the mix inside a tray mould to form a mix layer;
- (c) vacuum vibro-compacting the mix layer to obtain a compacted sheet;
- (d) using electromagnetic radiofrequency waves having a frequency of less than 300 MHz to dielectrically preheat the compacted sheet to a temperature where catalysis of the binder starts; and
- (e) hardening the binder by heating in an oven in order to obtain the finished products.

10. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein the temperature comprises less than 10°C.

11. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein the temperature comprises less than 10°C.

12. (new) A method for manufacturing a sheet of agglomerate material in a plant comprising a plurality of stations, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) mixing in a first station stone materials of predetermined particle size with a binder consisting of organic resins to produce a mix;
- (b) distributing in a second station the mix inside a tray mould to form a mix layer;
- (c) vacuum vibro-compacting in a third station the mix layer to obtain a compacted sheet;
- (d) using electromagnetic radiofrequency waves having a frequency of less than 300 MHz in an intermediate station to dielectrically preheat the compacted sheet to a temperature where catalysis of the binder starts; and
- (e) hardening in a final station the binder by heating in an oven in order to obtain the finished products.

13. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein the plurality of stations are arranged sequentially in the plant so that the steps can be performed sequentially.

14. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein step (c) is performed using means to generate electromagnetic waves having a frequency of between 25 and 35 MHz in the intermediate station.